

Postgraduate Diploma/Master of Education with Specialisms (with Postgraduate Certificate exit route)



Accreditation of Prior Learning Pack

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL): GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS TO THE PGDip/MEd WITH SPECIALISMS

INTRODUCTION

- 1 These guidelines are based on the University's APL Policy which can be accessed in full at <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/academicoffice/>
- 2 APL is the **Accreditation of Prior Learning**. This is an umbrella term which embraces two forms of prior learning:
 - **APCL** – the Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (based on qualifications that you hold)
 - **APEL** – the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (based on life and work experiences that you have accrued)
- 3 All APL applications for the PGDip / MEd are taken by an APL Board of which the Course Director is a member.

PRINCIPLES

- 4 The University's APL Policy includes the following principles:

• It is the achievement of learning , or the outcomes of that learning, and not just the experience of the activities alone that shall be accredited.
• Learning must be evidenced in writing and authenticated at the appropriate level.
• Decisions regarding the accreditation of prior learning are a matter of academic judgment, informed by professional bodies and other stakeholders.
• For programmes of 180 or more credit points, students must register for modules amounting to at least the final third of the credit value of the award at the highest level.
• For programmes of up to and including 120 credit points, students must register for modules amounting to at least the final half of the credit value of the award at the highest level.

In addition to the above, you should note that the evidence that you use for an APL application, should be based on current learning. The course team for the PGDip/MEd with Specialisms stipulates that learning / experience must have been achieved within the last 5 years from the date of entry to the course.

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR CERTIFICATED LEARNING (APCL)

- 5 See Table at Appendix A. Complete Form APCL at Appendix B.

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (APEL)

- 6 See Table at Appendix A. Complete Form APEL at Appendix C.
- 7 The **portfolio of evidence** for an APEL claim should be set out in the format below:

Format for portfolio of evidence for APEL claim:	
TITLE PAGE	Your name The name of the course for which you are applying The fact that you are submitting an APEL claim
TABLE OF CONTENTS	List each section with page numbers
CURRICULUM VITAE	Include your up-to-date CV
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	Set this out briefly in a table with dates
EDUCATION AND TRAINING HISTORY	Set this out in a table with dates
TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	Set these out in a table with dates
INTRODUCTION	Set out the context of the claim in terms of your overall academic and career plans
EXPERIENCE	In this section, expand on your curriculum vitae or other significant life events and include a description of experiences including informal learning activities eg conferences/workshops
LEARNING ACCOUNT	Present a <u>full</u> account of the learning that has resulted and reflections on what you have learned from the experience

Format for portfolio of evidence for APEL claim:	
LEARNING OUTCOMES	Set out clear statements of demonstrable behavioural change/performance resulting from the learning together with a list of demonstrable learning outcomes
EVIDENCE	Set out evidence of the achievement of each learning outcome
AUTHENTICITY	Set out evidence demonstrating that the prior learning you are claiming was completed by you
CLAIM	This needs to be realistic, based on sound advice <u>In discussion with the Course Director</u> you need to record the number of credits that you feel your APEL claim is worth in terms of exemptions from the course eg 30 credits

- 8 Applicants seeking exemption based on APEL may be invited to attend for interview by the APL Board. A record of the interview will be made using the relevant form.

APL DECISIONS

- 9 All APCL and APEL applications will be formally considered by an APL Board and will be decided as follows:
- Approved
 - Insufficient Evidence
 - Not approved
- 10 Where the decision is of **Insufficient Evidence**, you will have **one opportunity** to provide additional evidence to the APL Board if this is considered necessary and appropriate, within a timeframe determined by the APL Board.
- 11 The decision of the APL Board shall be final (there shall be no right of appeal except on grounds of procedural irregularity).
- 12 Applicants shall be informed of the outcome following the APL Board's decision.

Faculty guidelines and policies are subject to continuing review and the Faculty reserves the right to make changes at any time, before or after a candidate's admission. As much notice as possible will be given of any changes.

APPENDIX A

Check here to see if you can claim any exemptions from the PGDip/MEd with Specialisms

The PGDip/MEd with Specialisms is made up of modules amounting to 180 credit points. You may be able to enter the course at a higher stage or claim exemption from particular modules if your situation matches any of those listed here. We call this process the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). You can gain APL credits based on awards that you hold (certificated learning - APCL) or on life experiences that you have accrued (experiential learning - APEL).

APL credits can only be sought at the point of entry to the course and cannot be sought once you have registered. Claims received after the application deadline will not be processed and you will be considered only for entry to Year 1 of the course.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER AWARD HOLDERS (Certificated Learning)

	Do you:	You can claim:	You now need to:
1	Hold a PGCE from the University of Ulster which was awarded 5 years ago or less?	60 APL credits of exemption	<p>Complete your online application form and submit it no later than the end of the first week of September of the year you seek to start the course.</p> <p>Include the following in Section 7 of the Form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name of the University of Ulster award that you received • The date on which you received the award • Your name as it appears on your award parchment <p>The University will match this information against its own records to verify your application for exemptions.</p>
2	Hold a PGCE (FE) from the University of Ulster which was awarded 5 years ago or less?	60 APL credits of exemption	

HOLDERS OF AWARDS OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER (Certificated Learning)

(note that a deadline of the beginning of the last week of August in the year in which you intend to start the course applies for both the online application form and the APL application (Form APCL) as you have to submit documentation and this has to be verified by us)

	Do you:	You can claim:	You now need to:
4	<p>Hold a PGCE from another university which is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at level 7 in the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) (England, Wales and NI)? (see http://ofqual.gov.uk/help-and-advice/comparing-qualifications/) at level 11 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)? (see http://scqf.org.uk/the-framework) 	60 APL credits of exemption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete your online application form <i>indicating clearly in Section 5.4 'Point of Entry'</i> that you are submitting an exemption claim at the same time. Submit the online form by the beginning of the last week of August in the year in which you intend to start the course. Complete Form APCL in Appendix B and attach to that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a <u>copy</u> of your PGCE award transcript; and (b) an official letter (on headed paper) from the awarding institution confirming that the award is at level 7 (England, Wales, NI) or level 11 (Scotland) if the level is not clear in the transcript. <u>Note: if the award includes different levels, a clear breakdown of those levels must be included.</u> Post the APCL Form and attachments to the following address to arrive no later than the beginning of the last week of August in the year you wish to start the course (APCL Forms received after this date will not be processed and you will be considered only for entry to Year 1 of the course). Mrs Philippa Bell Room 17G07, Faculty of Social Sciences University of Ulster Shore Road, Newtownabbey Co Antrim BT37 0QB, Northern Ireland

	Do you:	You can claim:	You now need to:
5	<p>Hold other relevant postgraduate qualifications in education (awarded 5 years ago or less) at the following levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> level 9 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) for Ireland? (see www.nfq.ie) level 7 in the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) (England, Wales and NI)? level 11 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)? 	<p>The number of APL credits of exemption will depend on the type of award that you hold</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete your online application form <i>indicating clearly in Section 5.4 'Point of Entry'</i> that you are submitting an exemption claim at the same time. Submit the online form by the end of the final week of August in the year you wish to start the course. Complete Form APCL (Appendix B) and attach to that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a copy of your award transcript; and b) an official letter (on headed paper) from the awarding institution confirming that the award is at the appropriate level if the level is not clear in the transcript. <u>Note: if the award includes different levels, a clear breakdown of those levels must be included.</u> Post the APCL Form and attachments to the following address to arrive no later than the beginning of the last week of August in the year you wish to start the course (APCL Forms received after this date will not be processed and you will be considered only for entry to Year 1 of the course). Mrs Philippa Bell Room 17G07, Faculty of Social Sciences University of Ulster Shore Road, Newtownabbey Co Antrim BT37 0QB, Northern Ireland

CLAIM BASED ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

(note that a deadline of the beginning of the last week of August in the year in which you intend to start the course applies for both the online application form and the APL application (Form APEL) as you have to submit a portfolio and this has to be assessed by us)

	Do you:	You can claim:	You now need to:
6	<p>Have other experience, gained within the last 5 years, that you think might exempt you from parts of the course</p> <p>eg extensive senior management experience in a school or training organisation?</p>	<p>The number of APL credits of exemption will depend on the assessment of your portfolio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the Course Director to verify whether a claim based on experiential learning is appropriate in your case and to discuss the compilation of a portfolio of evidence. • Complete your online application form indicating clearly in <i>Section 5.4 'Point of Entry'</i> that you are submitting a claim based on experiential learning. Submit the online form by the beginning of the last week of August in the year in which you intend to start the course. • Complete Form APEL (Appendix C) • Post the APEL Form and your portfolio to the following address to arrive no later than the beginning of the last week of August in the year in which you intend to start the course (APEL Forms and portfolios received after this date will not be processed and you will be considered only for entry to Year 1 of the course). <i>Mrs Philippa Bell Room 17G07, Faculty of Social Sciences University of Ulster Shore Road, Newtownabbey Co Antrim BT37 0QB Northern Ireland</i>

APPENDIX B

ULSTER UNIVERSITY: FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

FORM APCL

(Use this form for a claim for the Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning)

SECTION A: APPLICANT DETAILS (Applicant to complete this section)

Name:	
Course applied for:	
Mode of attendance (P/T or F/T):	
Date of proposed entry:	
Date on which you submitted your online application form for the course:	
Evidence presented (ie the qualifications on which you are basing your APCL claim)	
Number of credits of exemption sought eg 30 credits	

SECTION B: EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED (Course Director to complete this section)

A copy of the evidence produced for interview should be retained by the Course/Subject Director.

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SECTION D: MODULE EXEMPTION (Course Director to complete this section)

To be completed ONLY if applicant is seeking exemption from an individual module(s) or entry via Advanced Standing. Please indicate how the applicant's prior certificated learning meets the relevant learning outcomes for each module for which an exemption is sought.

Name and code of module for which exemption is sought	Outline of evidence presented by applicant that he/she has met the learning outcomes of the module	Module exemption recommended (Yes/No)

SECTION E: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Course Director to complete this section)

Please add any additional information you feel may be relevant when considering this applicant's request for APCL

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SECTION F: COURSE/SUBJECT APL BOARD DECISION (Course Director to complete this section)

DECISION	Please ✓	COMMENTS (if approved, include the number of course credits from which the applicant will be exempted)
Approved		
Insufficient evidence		
Not approved		

NAME OF ASSESSOR / INTERVIEWER	SIGNATURE	POSITION	DATE

NOTE TO APPLICANTS – before posting this form to the University, have you checked that you have attached all required documentation? If this is not attached, your claim cannot be considered.

APPENDIX C

ULSTER UNIVERSITY: FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

FORM APEL

(Use this form for a claim for the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning)

SECTION A: APPLICANT DETAILS (applicant to complete this section)

Name:	
Course applied for:	
Mode of attendance (P/T or F/T):	
Date of proposed entry to the course:	
Date on which you submitted your online application form for the course:	
Date of interview (<i>if applicable</i>):	
Evidence presented for APEL claim:	
Exemption sought (admission /advanced standing/ module exemption):	

SECTION B: EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE PRESENTED (experiential learning) (Course Director to complete this section)

- See Appendix A of Faculty APL Procedures for Guidelines that may be used for detailed assessment of a portfolio of evidence.
- A copy of the evidence produced for interview should be retained by the Course Director.

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SECTION C: EVALUATION OF INTERVIEW – APEL APPLICATION (this section to be completed by the Course Director only if the applicant is being interviewed)		
<p>NOTE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant's suitability for the course should be assessed on the basis of the criteria outlined below. Decisions should be based on evidence from the interview <u>and from the evidence produced</u>. A score of between 1 and 5 should be awarded under each heading. • The Course APL Board (of which the Interviewers are members) shall have due regard for the authenticity, currency, validity, reliability and sufficiency of the evidence provided. • An aggregate score of 11 is normally necessary for admission to a programme. Where the number of applications for places exceeds the number of places available on a programme, the score awarded in this interview may be used to rank applicants in order of preference. • A score of between 1 and 5 should be awarded for each of the criteria listed above, where 1 suggests the applicant does not show enough merit in the area and 5 suggests the applicant shows considerable merit in the area. 		
Criteria	Assessment of applicant's ability to meet the criteria based on evidence presented	Score (1 – 5)
<p>Relevant experience (professional, industrial or education)</p> <p><i>Please explain how the applicant's prior experience is relevant to the selected course of study</i></p>		
<p>Academic skills (eg critical thinking, reflective writing, knowledge of subject area etc).</p> <p><i>Please outline how the applicant shows an appropriate understanding of the academic skills required for the selected course of study</i></p>		
<p>Awareness of course expectations</p> <p><i>Please outline how the applicant shows an appropriate understanding of the content and workload for the selected course of study</i></p>		
TOTAL SCORE (/15)		

SECTION D: MODULE EXEMPTION (Course Director to complete this section)

To be completed ONLY if applicant is seeking exemption from an individual module(s) or entry via Advanced Standing. Please indicate how the applicant's prior learning or prior experiential learning meets the relevant learning outcomes for each module for which an exemption is sought.

Name and code of module for which exemption is sought	Outline of evidence presented by applicant that he/she has met the learning outcomes of the module	Module exemption recommended (Yes/No)

SECTION E: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Course Director to complete this section)

Please add any additional information you feel may be relevant when considering this applicant's request for APEL

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SECTION F: COURSE/SUBJECT APL BOARD DECISION (Course Director to complete this section)

DECISION	Please ✓	COMMENTS (if approved, include the number of course credits from which the applicant will be exempted)
Approved		
Insufficient evidence		
Not approved		

NAME OF ASSESSOR / INTERVIEWER	SIGNATURE	POSITION	DATE

NOTE TO APPLICANTS – before posting this form to the University, have you checked that you have attached all required information? If this is not attached, your APEL claim cannot be considered.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Have you completed your online application form?**
- ☐ **Is the email address that you have given on the form one that you check frequently?**
- ☐ **If you are posting an APL application to us, have you indicated this in the relevant section of your online application form?**

We hope this APL Pack has been useful to you and we look forward to receiving your application in due course.

